

## Preventing Crimes of Opportunity

The City of Veneta contracted deputies and their partners in the Fern Ridge Neighborhood Watch (FRNW) are working hard to prevent crime. Meanwhile, thieves are looking for simple crimes of opportunity. These can include stealing packages from porches, the contents of a mailbox, valuables left in an unlocked car, and even information about

personal identity found in trash cans on the curb.

But Veneta Sergeant Steve Sieczkowski says a few simple steps can make you less vulnerable to such property crimes. First, he recommends all homes install motion-activated lights.

To avoid porch theft, he suggests planning for package deliveries. Have packages delivered to your work

place if possible. When placing your order, include special delivery instructions.

Lane County Sheriff's Office's (LCSO) Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Sergeant Carrie Carver, offers additional tips. Keep your home's exterior well lit, especially around entryways. "Lights on timers inside the home can give the appearance that someone is

home," she explains. If possible, get a security system. "Homes with security systems, cameras, and a sign out front rarely get burglarized," says Carver.

Always lock doors and windows on your home, vehicle, and garage. "Thieves will walk through a neighborhood trying doors," she continues. "Don't let yours be

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## McCoy and Cotter Bring Perspective to City Council

At the Jan. 14 Veneta City Council meeting, newly re-elected Councilors Thomas Cotter and Robbie McCoy will be sworn in to begin four-year terms that run through Dec. 2022. "We are so fortunate to have two elected officials who bring great strength and experience to their positions," said City Administrator Ric Ingham.

With the exception of a

two-year hiatus, Cotter has been on the Council for 20 years. A principal broker/owner of Fern Ridge Realty, Cotter also serves on the Lane Council of Governments Loan Advisory Committee and also serves on the Lane Council of Governments Board of Directors. As a councilor, he takes a special interest in expanding the area's fiber-optic capability

and communications infrastructure, building out bicycle and walking trails around Veneta, and creating a safe, sustainable, and economically viable community for all Veneta residents.

"His institutional knowledge is invaluable," Ingham explained. "He provides great perspective about how and why we made the decisions in the

past that still guide us today."

A local business leader, McCoy has been the owner of Robbie's Windowbox Cafe since 2001 and served as treasurer and a member of the Board of Directors for the Veneta-Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce since 2002. In 2009, Mayor Sandra Larson appointed McCoy to a citizen

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## Utility Rates to Rise

Beginning January 1, the City of Veneta will see increases in both water and sewer rates. The base residential bill for combined water/wastewater will increase from \$64.65 per month to \$68.37, with commercial users rising from \$80.12 to \$84.21. All changes will be reflected on the February 1 utility bills.

Sewer rates will increase by 7 percent, with base rates for residential accounts rising \$3.40 per month to \$51.97 per dwelling unit and commercial accounts \$3.48 to \$53.21.

Water base and usage

rates for residential, commercial, and bulk water users will increase by 2 percent, or approximately .67 cents for a typical home and \$1.33 for a commercial account. This will be the fifth small increase in water rates since 2013. According to City staff, such increases are necessary to meet the debt service obligations incurred to build the pipeline to carry water from EWEB's infrastructure in Eugene to Veneta, and are likely to continue through 2021.

Since 2013, the City has updated its Wastewater

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### CIVIC CALENDAR

January 2019

All meetings held at City Hall unless otherwise noted

1	New Year's Day		Closed
1	Planning Com. Meeting Rescheduled to Jan 8th		
2	Park Board Meeting		4:30 p.m.
8	Planning Commission Meeting		6:30 p.m.
9	Economic Development Com. Meeting		2:00 p.m.
14	City Council Meeting, Urban Renewal Agency meeting - immediately following		6:30 p.m.
17	Municipal Court		8:30 a.m.
21	Martin Luther King Jr. Day		Closed
28	City Council Meeting		6:30 p.m.
31	Joint meeting - Citizen Advisory and Technical Advisory Com. on Transportation System Plan		6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

## Crimes

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the one that's unlocked!" Don't leave valuables where they can be seen inside the vehicle or through your front door or window. Thieves won't hesitate to break a window if the prize is tempting enough.

Keep foliage trimmed around windows and doors where burglars are most likely to gain access. Plant a thorny bush or shrub, such as a rose, beneath windows. Make the potential area of entry uncomfortable for thieves.

Leaving town for a few days or more? Ask a friend or neighbor to check on your house. "Have them move things around on the front porch and sit awhile," Carver suggests. Also, stop your mail and newspaper delivery, but don't put a note to your delivery person on the

outside of the box. "Criminals will see that note too."

To avoid identity theft, do not dispose of personal mail in your trash. "Thieves will dig through your trash and, even if you've torn up your mail, they will piece it back together and make a 'profile' to steal your identity," adds Deputy Richard Smith. And, because property crimes are more frequent at night, he also recommends that trash cans be put out on the morning of collection, rather than the night before.

"If you are the victim of a crime or witness suspicious activity, call the Lane County Sheriff's Office immediately," urges Sieczkowski. This increases the odds that a deputy can arrive in time to make contact with suspects.

"People frequently use

social media to 'report' crimes," says FRNW Captain Dave Quirk. Posts are not a substitute for calling in a report to LCSO, but social media does have a role to play. "After calling the Sheriff's Office, follow up by posting pictures you may have captured as well as describing the event and location," he continues. Sharing this information through the neighborhood watch or other community sites helps your neighbors be proactive in protecting their own property and to potentially help identify a criminal.

Make a New Year's resolution to protect your home and property in 2019. Carver suggests that residents use LCSO's free Home Security/Safety Evaluation. "An expert will come visit your home, making suggestions of how you can change your

landscaping, improve sightlines to other homes, and improve ingress and egress for emergency personnel." These crime prevention audits are free of charge. To schedule yours, visit [www.lanesheriff.org](http://www.lanesheriff.org) and select the "crime prevention" link.

To report a crime or suspicious behavior, call LCSO at 541-682-4141. If the situation is urgent or you are in personal danger, dial 911. To learn more about participating in a Neighborhood Watch, visit the City of Veneta's website and select the "Services" link to reach the "Public Safety" page, which has a Fern Ridge Neighborhood Watch tab; visit [www.lanesheriff.org](http://www.lanesheriff.org) and select the "Neighborhood Watch" link; or call Sergeant Carver at 541-682-4179.

## McCoy and Cotter

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position on the City's Budget Committee. Because of her long experience with the Chamber, Mayor Larson immediately appointed McCoy as the Council Liaison to the Veneta-Fern Ridge Chamber as well. In February, 2017, she was sworn in to fill the remaining two years of a four-year term vacated by City Councilor Laura Ruff.

"Robbie really has the pulse of the community," Ingham continued. "When you run a coffee shop, you hear what the community

thinks. Robbie is able to share those perspectives with her fellow council members so they can best represent the community's interests."

McCoy's special interests include Fern Ridge Neighborhood Watch, establishing a Community Policing District, expanding pedestrian and bicycle paths, as well as creating business opportunities in Veneta.

The Council priorities for the coming years will include street improvement projects, public safety, law enforce-

ment and parks.

"Now that the City has addressed initial pavement preservation projects, the Council will likely focus on larger street projects such as improvements to East Hunter, 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and Perkins," said Ingham. Also, with the Community Policing District failing to gain support, the Council will want to evaluate the City's existing law enforcement contract, he believes. "It's also time to revisit our Parks Master Plan," which was last updated in 1998. "Since that up-

date, we've invested in the Territorial Skate Park, the community pool, the kiddie pool, and City Park, enriching the lives of our residents."

The Veneta City Council consists of a Mayor and four Councilors elected from the City at large. McCoy and Cotter are joined by Councilors Calvin Kenney and Keith Weiss. The Council meets on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, with meetings open to the public.

## Rates

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Master Plan to invest in the sewer system and keep pace with current needs and

future growth. In 2017, the Veneta City Council contracted a third-party financial consultant to conduct a com-

prehensive Wastewater System Development Fee and Sewer Rate Analysis. The study recommended the City

implement a 7 percent increase each year from July 2018 through 2024.